

EMERGENCY PROGRAM SPECIALIST

GS-0301-13

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ)
Western Region Office (WRO)

Master Record #: 7PQ559

INTRODUCTION:

Serves as ESF 11 Emergency Program Specialist for US Department of Agriculture Animal Plant & Health Inspection Service (APHIS) assigned Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions. In this capacity, represents and speaks for USDA APHIS Region Emergency Program Manager (EPM). Coordinates all assigned ESF 11 assets and resources in response to catastrophic disaster or high-visibility national incidents. Coordinates and oversees ESF 11 preparedness and response activities with other national Federal agencies. Works and meets with senior management regularly. Provides briefings to agency officials and other senior officials on status of USDA emergency response actions. Deploys to disaster-affected areas when necessary.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Serves as region expert and advisor to USDA APHIS EPM in development and implementation of concepts, policy guidance, and critical operations planning for regional ESF 11 emergency preparedness and USDA APHIS Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). Assists EPM with coordinating, testing, and implementing an integrated set of programs to ensure continuity of essential USDA functions during all hazards emergencies. Serves as USDA point of contact for these activities in coordination with USDA APHIS EPM, other ESF-11 components, and other Federal Departments and agencies.

Briefs USDA APHIS EPM and officials at all levels of Federal government on programs and their responsibilities. Participates in development of USDA strategic goals and action plans in support of ESF 11. Participates in national and regional training exercises and satisfies requirements for maintaining certification as Federal emergency management official.

Serves as ESF 11 Emergency Coordinator within assigned FEMA region. Provides support to FEMA Regional Resource Coordination Center (RRCC), Joint Field Office (JFO), and Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Incumbent supports COOP preparation and activation within assigned FEMA region, and ensures readiness of COOP relocation site(s). Conceptualizes and implements improvements to regional COOP to enhance effectiveness of regional emergency preparedness measures.

Coordinates regional training programs for ESF 11 emergency preparedness, damage assessment and disaster support, and provisions of interagency training in emergency programs.

Plans, schedules, and coordinates work assignments for APHIS collateral duty employees (CDE) based on priorities, consideration of difficulty, requirements of work, and capabilities of employee. Develops performance standards for CDE and ensures quality and timelines of work assigned, evaluates overall performance, and provides feedback to CDE's permanent supervisor. Gives advice, counsel, or instructions to CDE on both work and administrative matters. Identifies training needs of CDE and makes provisions to satisfy these needs. Understands and adheres to objectives of USDA Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity program and objectives.

Responsible for other duties as assigned.

EMERGENCY OR TESTING ASSIGNMENTS:

Incumbent may be subject to 24-hour on-call in event of emergency, to test emergency response plan or for other reasons. May require irregular work hours, work at locations other than official duty station, and duties other than those specified in official position description. Must be able to relocate to emergency sites with little advance notice and to function under intense physical and mental stress.

FACTOR I: KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

Extensive knowledge of Federal emergency management practices and procedures and of USDA programs and procedures. Comprehensive understanding of how they relate to emergency management activities of local, state, and Federal government sectors. Knowledge of service requirements of FEMA.

In-depth knowledge of and ability to lead full range of program activities mandated by ESF 11. Ability to provide technical leadership and guidance to team members and to perform broad array of functions in support of program.

Comprehensive knowledge of qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyze and monitor effectiveness, efficiency and productivity of USDA services and support provided to external entities, including FEMA and emergency response entities in Federal community. Recommend improvements to EPN and may conduct comprehensive studies to assess and promote program operations.

Expert knowledge of client needs (Food Nutrition Service, Department of Interior, Food Safety Inspection Service, and other state, Federal and non-governmental agencies). Thorough understanding of business/industrial community available to provide services to these clients. Anticipate and respond to changing and ongoing needs.

Expert ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing; to conduct meetings, conferences and workshops; to develop and promote public and community interest in agency programs; to establish and maintain effective working relationships; and to counsel and advise interested parties about USDA emergency management objectives, policies and procedures.

FACTOR II: SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

The USDA APHIS EPM provides overall administrative and technical guidance. Due to sensitivity of program area, incumbent meets regularly with EPM but independently plans, develops, and implements assigned responsibilities, referring only the most sensitive and controversial problems to EPM. Responsible for technical adequacy and accuracy of work. Work is reviewed only for conformance to policy, coordination and overall effectiveness. Incumbent has high degree of independent responsibility for program operations and evaluation of team functions and responsibilities. Technical supervision and review is usually limited to discussions of controversial issues, problems involving interpretation of or departure from policy, or problems that may change scope of assignment.

FACTOR III: GUIDELINES

Guidelines for assignments in emergency management include guidance issued by ESF 11, state and local laws and ordinances pertaining to emergency preparedness and response activities. Other guidelines include USDA and Federal rules, regulations, methodology, practices, and theory related to programs assigned. Incumbent operates within broad program guidelines, including general administrative policies, USDA regulations, public law and precedents. Available guidelines provide general direction, but do not have specific applicability to wide variety of situations encountered. The incumbent uses judgment, discretion, initiative and resourcefulness in deviating from traditional methods or researching trends and patterns to develop new methods, criteria, or proposed new policies to provide EPM with comprehensive recommendations on circumstances requiring significant deviation from existing guidelines.

FACTOR IV: COMPLEXITY

Responsibilities involve analysis of interrelated issues for effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity of ESF 11 and National Emergency Management Program. Decisions about how to proceed in planning, organizing and implementing critical region ESF 11 emergency preparedness operations and APHIS COOP plans are complicated by various program goals, objectives and workloads. Duties are performed in highly independent manner and typically require application and exercise of extensive and/or expert technical knowledge on wide range of service and support issues highly relevant to regional management and client agencies, coupled with ability to recognize and accommodate management and/or client needs while working within framework of accepted policy and statutory requirements. The complexity increases with the need to anticipate needs and establish priorities during incident situations. Therefore, the incumbent must be resourceful in solving novel and oftentimes obscure problems, typically involving combinations of complex features.

FACTOR V: SCOPE AND EFFECT

Emergency management duties are: to represent USDA as an equal partner with other Federal agencies assigned Presidential Emergency Management requirements, to provide preparation guidance, and to assure readiness for assumption of leadership role for USDA emergency management program should circumstances require such action.

Purpose of position is to provide program direction and expert technical advice regarding external services and support to client activities, both at regional and national levels. Work efforts have significant impact throughout region and agency in terms of regional emergency management activities and involve highly specialized technical responsibilities.

FACTOR VI: PERSONAL CONTACTS AND POUPOSE OF CONTACTS

Personal contacts are with region, Federal, state, and local offices, advisory groups, business organizations, individual business representatives, other government agencies, and members of general public. Contacts are made to exchange information; to develop, promote, implement, and evaluate various programs assigned, and to resolve critical problems related to these areas. Requires skill in representing agency to Government officials at all levels.

FACTOR VII: PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Work is mostly sedentary; however, some standing, walking, bending, carrying of lightweight objects, and extensive travel regionally and nationally are required. May incur intense physical and/or mental stress, by working in areas where shelters and/or resources may be limited and where tasking must be accomplished within very short timeframes.

FACTOR VIII: WORK ENVIRONMENT

Deployment to disaster area may involve some adverse working conditions. Temporary emergency working conditions may place limitations on availability of adequate power, water, and infrastructure support. Other work is performed primarily in office setting. Work area is adequately lighted, heated and ventilated.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Must be able to obtain and maintain Critical-Sensitive (CS) National Security clearance because of access to Top Secret classified information. Position will be subject to random drug testing.

APHIS is an emergency response agency. This means that all Agency employees may be asked or assigned to participate in rotating temporary duty assignments to support emergency programs at some time during their careers with APHIS. It is difficult to predict the frequency with which such emergency situations may occur – and could range from several emergencies in a year to none over the course of many years. In the event that you are called upon to support an emergency program, this may require irregular work hours, including overtime, and may include duties other than those specified in your official position description. While some emergency program support assignments may be able to be performed at the employee's current duty station, in other cases employees may be asked to go on-site to a temporary duty station location. In addition, it may be necessary for employees to participate in multiple rotations to an emergency program assignment. Attempts will be made to keep disruption to the employee to a minimum.